

Twentieth Century World

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Office Hours: Thursdays: 11.45-12.45pm

HIST 213 : 013
Tuesdays/Thursdays 1-2.20pm
Cullimore Hall 111
Fall 2025

Course Description:

This course introduces students to some of the major, political, economic, cultural, and social developments that have shaped the history of our contemporary world. The course offers an interdisciplinary and comparative view of twentieth century world history. As the history of the world is too broad to do justice to over one semester we will look at a variety of case studies that we will use to illuminate the major events, processes, and developments of the twentieth century; from two world wars and economic troubles to the Cold War and globalization. Throughout the semester we will try to shift the focus of twentieth century history away from a “centrality” of the West and instead focus on topics like imperialism, fascism, communism, anti-imperialism, and the end of the Cold War and how they affected the rest of the world.

Course Objectives:

The students of the course will analyze historical events and movements of the 20th century and assess their subsequent significance. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills to analyze information and develop their writing skills by writing two primary source based papers. Additionally students will learn how to synthesize historical and geographical information acquired through the understanding of maps and primary source information.

In this class, students will regularly practice their writing skills with two IN PERSON exams, and two primary source papers and will have many opportunities to express their ideas in class discussions. In both the written assignments and the class discussions, students will develop their analytical skills by identifying the course readings’ main theses, supporting arguments, evidence, assumptions, and rhetorical strategies.

Course Goals:

Upon completion of this course, students should specifically be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge of some of the fundamental concepts and theories of historical events and ideas related to the 20th Century World.
- Evaluate global exchanges and perspectives in context of social, political, religious, and intellectual traditions.
- Read, analyze, organize and synthesize, evidence, historical problems, and interpretations connected to the history of the 20th Century World.

Grading;

In-class participation	20%
Primary Source Papers	30% (each worth 15%)
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%

Grade scale is as follows:

- A: 90 points and higher
- B+: 85-89.99
- B: 80-84.99
- C+: 75-79.99
- C: 70-74.99
- D: 60-69.99
- F: 59.99 and lower

Late papers and exams:

Exams and papers are due on the dates announced in class or indicated below. Unless discussed with me IN ADVANCE, late assignments will have their grades lowered. Excused lateness for the take-home exams will only be granted for students who can document medical or family emergency. Students who feel a personal emergency is sufficiently grave to warrant an excused absence must speak with me the week BEFORE the exam is due.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):

NJIT treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly.

The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the university.

In concert with the NJIT code of conduct, which mandates “ that all work submitted in a course, academic research, or other activity is the student’s own and created without the aid of impermissible technologies, materials, or collaborations ,” this course has been designed to promote your learning, critical thinking, skills, and intellectual development

without reliance on unauthorized technology including chatbots and other forms of “artificial intelligence” (AI). Although you may use search engines, spell-check, and simple grammar-check in crafting your assignments, you will be asked to submit your written work with the following statement. “I certify that this assignment represents my own work. I have not used any unauthorized or unacknowledged assistance or sources in completing it including free or commercial systems or services offered on the internet or text generating systems embedded into software.” Please consult with your instructor if you have any questions about the permissible use of technology in this class.

Attendance policy:

I will be taking attendance throughout the semester as attendance is required.

If you have any religious holidays that you plan to observe that will in any way affect your capabilities of completing the assignments on time, please get in touch with me early so we can discuss that and make plans to accommodate that.

Schedule of Topics and Readings:

Week 1

September 2nd: Introduction

September 4th: Overview of the Twentieth Century

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 1 (skim)

Week 2

September 9th: Origins of the Twentieth Century - Imperialism

Readings: *Twentieth-Century World*: Chapter 2

September 11th: Path to War

Readings: Hobsbawm: From Peace to War

Week 3

September 16th: World War I

In class Viewing Part 1:

Film: They Shall Not Grow Old

September 18th: World War I

In class Viewing Part 1I:

Film: They Shall Not Grow Old

Week 4

September 23rd: Aftermath of the War: The Russian Revolution

Readings: Gerwath: Russian Revolutions

September 25th: When did the War End? An Uneasy Peace
Readings: Gerwath: Apparent Triumph of Democracy

Week 5

September 30th: The Rise of Fascism
Readings: Paxton: The Five Stages of Fascism

October 2nd: Roaring Twenties? The Great Depression
Readings: Hobsbawm: Into the Economic Abyss

Week 6

October 7th: Stalinism as a Different Option
Readings: Fitzpatrick – Palaces on Monday

October 9th: The Weimar Republic and the Rise of the Nazis
Readings: Ian Kershaw: “Hitler and the Germans:
Hobsbawm: The Fall of Liberalism

Week 7

October 14th: Path to War – The Munich Conference
Readings: Hobsbawm: Against the Common Enemy

October 16th: Appeasement - The Munich Conference
PRIMARY SOURCE DISCUSSION

Week 8

October 21st: Could Hitler Have Been Stopped?
Documentary Viewing

October 23rd: **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 9

October 28th: The Beginning of the Cold War
Readings: Robbins: Cold Division 1945-1953

October 30th: The Cold War and the Third World
Reading: Crockatt: The United States, The Soviet Union,
and the Third World World 1953-1965

Week 10

November 4th: The Start of Decolonization

Film Viewing Part I
The Battle of Algiers

November 6th: The Start of Decolonization

Film Viewing Part II – followed by discussion
The Battle of Algiers

Week 11

November 11th: The Belgrade Conference - The Nonaligned Movement
PRIMARY SOURCE DISCUSSION

November 13th: The Vietnam War

Reading: Crockatt: The Vietnam War and the Superpower Triangle

Week 12

November 18th: Détente and Arms Control

Reading: Crockatt: Détente Under Pressure, p.253-268

November 20th: Détente, Europe and the Third World

Reading: Crockatt: Détente Under Pressure, p.268-300

Week 13

November 27th: Reaganism and the Return of the Arms Race

Readings: Crockatt: Reaganism and the Specter of Communism, p. 301-323

THANKSGIVING RECESS

Week 14

December 2nd: The Superpowers, the Middle East, and Latin America

Readings: Crockatt: Reaganism and the Spectre of Communism, p. 324-337

December 4th: Gorbachev and the Collapse of Communism

Readings: Crockatt: Gorbachev and the New World Disorder, p. 338-356

Week 15

December 9th: Final Office Hours

FINAL EXAM: Date and Time to be decided